THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH) : (a) No, Sir. No such complaints have been received by the Government.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Pakistani companies in Nepal against India

4195. SHRI ABANI ROY : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that ISI have been using Pakistani companies in Nepal against India as reported in the 'Hindustan Times' dated 13th August, 2001;

(b) if so, the facts and details thereof;

(c) whether the repeated assurances made by Nepalese Government that their territory would not be allowed for use against India has proved to be futile; and

(d) if so, the reaction of Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH) : (a) and (b) The Government is aware of the report published in the 'Hindustan Times' dated 13-8-2001 on ISI backed Pakistani companies operating in Nepal.

The Government is concerned about the misuse of Nepalese territory and the open India-Nepal border by Pakistani agencies, including companies, for activities inimical to India's interest and are seized of the matter.

(c) and (d) The Governments of India and Nepal have agreed that they would not allow their territory to be used for activities inimical to the interests of either country. A bilateral institutional mechanism has also been evolved which includes a Joint Working Group on Border Management and Home Secretary Level Talks to jointly address issues relating to maintenance of peace and security and prevention of criminal activities in the India-Nepal border areas. Regular dialogue of customs officials also takes place under the Agreement for Cooperation to control unauthorised Trade.

During the recent visit of External Affairs Minister to Nepal (August 17-19, 2001), our continuing concerns with regard to the clandestine use of Nepal's territory for anti-Indian activities by Pakistan's ISI were conveyed. He received a firm assurance from His Majesty's Government of Nepal that any such activity against India would not be tolerated and that necessary steps would be taken.